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CIA in Education Called 'Mistake' by Gardner

John W. Gardner, secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, said today it was "a mistake" for the Central Intelligence Agency to entangle itself in activities close to the field of education.

But, Gardner added in a statement: "I don't know any sensible person who believes that this nation can afford to be without a secret intelligence agency."

A spokesman said Gardner issued his statement after being asked by the Associated Press for comment on disclosures that the CIA has financially supported international activities of the National Student Association.

Gardner is one of three government officials directed by President Johnson last week to make "a careful review of any government activities that may endanger" the "integrity and independence" of the nation's educational institutions.

On Guideline Panel

Acting Secretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach announced that Johnson had directed him, CIA Director Richard Helms and Gardner to draw up a policy to guide "government agencies in their relationship to the international activities of American educational organizations."

Gardner also said today he has "little respect for critics who give themselves airs of moral superiority in attacking an activity they know to be necessary."

"But it was a mistake for the CIA ever to entangle itself in covert activities close to the field of education or scholarship or the universities."

"I have been opposed to that for years. I am still opposed to it."

"In short, I share President Johnson's view that the CIA's activities must never be allowed to endanger the independence and integrity of education."

The CIA general counsel, Lawrence R. Houston, said the government is not likely to prosecute the students who told of their relationship with the intelligence agency.

On Capitol Hill, meanwhile, Rep. Wayne L. Hays, D-Ohio, criticized the CIA for its undercover subsidizing of student

organizations and urged Congress to provide open and larger appropriations to assist U.S. student groups attending international meetings.

While praising President Johnson for directing the administration to find ways of "insuring that secret relationships between the CIA and the academic world are broken," Hays contended the State Department already has sufficient authority to provide "open, untainted aid to students, scholars and scientists."

Hays said the 1961 Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act — the Fulbright-Hays Act — provides full authority for public government support for representation at international non-governmental educational and scientific meetings.

Rep. L. Mendel Rivers, D-S.C., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, defended the CIA. He told the House that the CIA "got into this not because it wanted to but because it had to." He contended that such subsidies were justified because "we are not engaged in a tea party and our enemy is not a sorority organization."

Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., has called for a special congressional investigation into CIA operations among student and other groups.

Fulbright, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said yesterday that the extent of the CIA's activities "is much greater than I ever imagined it would be. I knew it engaged in some of these activities, but I had no idea it was extensive as it is at this late date."

A major unit of the American Newspaper Guild yesterday endorsed the guild's international affairs program and the use of foundation funds to support it.

The statement by the Empire State District Council of the A.N.G. followed a denial Saturday by the union of reports that it had knowingly accepted nearly \$1 million in grants from foundations used as conduits by the CIA.

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